

I thank my friend Dr. M. Harper for determining the moth and for pointing out that it is probably a new record for Herefordshire. — J. COOTER, Hereford City Museums and Art Gallery, Broad Street, Hereford, HR4 9AU: 20th March, 1985.

WHY DID THE CLAP NET BECOME EXTINCT? — The Clap Net was the standard insect net used in Britain (not on the Continent) from the early eighteenth century until the middle of the nineteenth, when it was replaced by the Bag Net which we use today. Later generations of entomologists have looked with awe on the old plates illustrating this net, and wondered how anybody managed to catch any insects at all with such an impractical device.

I was somewhat suspicious as to the popular belief in the clumsiness of the clap-net, and determined to try and make one to see how it would work. I soon found out, as have other modern users of clap-nets, that it is a very efficient tool for catching insects, indeed for taking an insect sitting on a bush it is infinitely better than the modern bag net.

This poses the question of why did it fall out of use? The usual answer is that it was bulky to carry when not in use, unlike the collapsible bag net. However at least one description implies that the sticks of a clap-net were fitted with joints like those of a fishing rod, which would have made it easily portable.

Having used a clap-net I would suggest another, more fundamental, reason for its decline. The one operation I found difficult with a clap-net, was boxing an insect. There is little excess material in which to hold the insect as you open the net to slip in a pill box. This would have been of little importance to an eighteenth century entomologist, who invariably killed his captures, either by pinching the thorax, or by piercing the body with a pin dipped in some poison such as tobacco juice. In the 1850s, the killing bottle was invented, and I believe that the efficient clap-net was replaced, by the slightly *less* efficient bag net because it proved virtually impossible to use a killing bottle with the old net. — G. F. LE PARD, Silver Crest, Silver St., Sway, Lymington, Hampshire.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON HYPSPYOGIA COSTALIS F. AND PYRALIS FARINALIS L. (LEP.: PYRALIDAE). — I read with interest M. N. McCrea's Note (in *Ent. Rec.*, 96:186) of his taking *H. costalis* on 3rd November 1983. I too had an *H. costalis* in very fresh condition at a very late date. This was at m.v. light here on 13th October 1984.

Emmet (*Field Guide to the Smaller British Lepidoptera*) gives the time of appearance of the imago of *P. farinalis* as June-August. However, during the past five years, my brother and I have accumulated records of this species on our farm, of the moth appearing in early April right through to November, and in this connection the following may be of interest.